

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Assistive Technology (AT) Committee Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2021

Members Present

Bea Shapiro, Chair
Bob Kresmer
Sue LeHew
Nathan Pullen
Karla Rivas-Parker

Members Absent

Mark Nelson

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Janet Fisher, Arizona Talking Book Library
Christine Tuttle, Arizona Talking Book Library
Dr. Kallie Harrier, View Finder
Dr. Carlos Grandela, View Finder

Call to Order and Introductions

Bea Shapiro, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of April 21, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Bob Kresmer motioned to approve the April 21, 2021, meeting minutes. Sue LeHew seconded the motion. Bea Shapiro requested the minutes to be corrected to indicate that the new iPhones were released in new colors. The motion to approve the amended minutes was passed by unanimous voice vote.

BARD Training Discussion

Janet Fisher stated the Arizona Talking Book Library had used BARD for several years, and it allowed individuals to download books and magazines at any time from the BARD database. She noted that individuals had the flexibility to download items when they wanted, although they did need a

device to download the items onto and appropriate Wi-Fi. Janet Fisher stated the library continued to seek ways to advertise BARD and she spoke to Bea Shapiro regarding ways the AT Committee could assist in marketing BARD. Christine Tuttle stated the Talking Book Library had 17 outreach volunteers that would provide outreach in the community. Ms. Tuttle stated the volunteers would provide in-person presentations if the organizations were comfortable, or through virtual platforms. Christine Tuttle stated the library volunteers had worked with schools, hospitals, care centers, assisted living communities, senior centers, children's organizations, and veteran's organizations. Christine Tuttle stated the library typically partnered with Sun Sounds in providing presentations, as the organization complimented the library's services. Christine Tuttle stated that many senior centers were still not holding in person presentations, so the library was focusing on different associations that centered around those populations. Janet Fisher inquired whether Christine Tuttle had also provided presentations to University of Arizona (UA) students. Christine Tuttle stated that she had provided presentations to UA students as well as Midwestern students. Ms. Fisher stated the library would be interested in providing outreach to any other organizations. Janet Fisher stated the library could distribute handouts to doctor's offices, so that technicians or support staff could provide resources to individuals. Christine Tuttle stated the library did work with several large ophthalmology associations and the Clinical Managers at Barnett Delaney Eyecare and the Southwest Eye Centers. Janet Fisher inquired how the library could increase outreach regarding BARD. Carlos Grandela stated View Finder did offer resources to patients and assisted individuals with completing an application to the Talking Book Library. Bob Kresmer stated that most eye doctors' offices would accept information and resources, although that information did not always get distributed to their patients. Dr. Grandela stated that information and resources could be displayed in the office so that individuals could see the materials or ask for more information. Janet Fisher stated the benefit to giving the doctors a way to display the resources, so the information could be put on a table. Sue LeHew stated that most eye doctors did have plastic brochure holders, which could include information about BARD and other resources. Christine Tuttle stated that library volunteers did distribute brochure stands with stickers that stated, "contact the library for more resources", although not all doctors were receptive to displaying that information. She noted that many doctors removed their handouts available to the public due to COVID-19.

Bea Shapiro suggested the library develop a PSA that discussed the resources available at the library. Janet Fisher stated the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) developed PSAs that were played on the radio and cable TV. She noted the PSAs were played in 3

month increments and were then off for a period. Janet Fisher stated the individuals would contact the NLS, and the NLS would give the contact information to the libraries to contact. Ms. Fisher inquired whether the library could reach out to any additional contacts or organizations. Bea Shapiro inquired whether individuals had difficulty accessing or downloading items from BARD. Janet Fisher stated that individuals could contact the library for any assistance in accessing BARD. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the library could provide training on using BARD to new library patrons as part of an introduction to the library. Christine Tuttle stated library staff were able to help patrons over the phone, although that was somewhat difficult if the individual needed a lot of help. Ms. Tuttle stated library staff tried to gauge how tech savvy individuals were to know how much assistance they would need. Bea Shapiro stated the library could potentially partner with Sun Sounds and offer an AT Hour, or a segment where individuals could learn about BARD and other AT devices. Christine Tuttle stated she could contact Sun Sounds to see if that would be possible. Bob Kresmer inquired whether Sun Sounds was available statewide, including rural areas. Christine Tuttle stated that Sun Sounds was better used via Internet radio, and that individuals using handheld radios had limited access in parts of northern Arizona. Janet Fisher stated she had considered creating YouTube videos, although several videos had already been created by the NLS regarding specific devices and BARD. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the library received statistics regarding the NFB Newsline usage. Janet Fisher stated that she received statistics such as the books that were checked out and the number of books that were checked out. Ms. Fisher noted that as a government agency, there was a sense of privacy for library patrons. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the library received information regarding the number of individuals that tried to access Newsline but were unsuccessful. Janet Fisher stated she received statistics regarding the number of individuals checking items out using BARD. Christine Tuttle noted that most BARD users were more independent and more comfortable asking for tech support if they needed it.

VRATE Presentation Discussion

Bea Shapiro stated the AT Committee had discussed potentially providing a presentation with ophthalmologists regarding low vision at the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE). Dr. Grandela stated that he would be comfortable talking about any topics and required whether the committee had any preferences. Bea Shapiro stated at the previous VRATE, the committee presented on virtual meeting and interview etiquette. Bea Shapiro stated the committee was interested in reaching out to ophthalmologists and to increase their participation at events such as VRATE. Karla Rivas-Parker agreed that ophthalmologists and eye care

professionals would benefit from knowing about the resources available to individuals. Bob Kresmer inquired whether professionals attending the presentation would be eligible to obtain Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Carlos Grandela stated he had recently developed a presentation that he could share with the committee. Dr. Grandela stated his presentation was called Adapting for Independence: Low Vision Rehabilitation and the purpose of the presentation was to discuss the differences between low vision optometry and what a typical doctor would provide. Carlos Grandela stated that he discussed View Finder, different causes of low vision, the legal definition of blindness, when an individual should be referred for low vision management, different kinds of visual impairment, survey questions, AT device training, sight substitutes, Orientation and Mobility (O&M) and AT. Dr. Grandela noted that he could tailor the presentation for VRATE as needed.

Bea Shapiro stated the committee would be interested in targeting the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors, who were often unable to read an eye chart. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the length of the presentation and how long the committee would have to present. Carlos Grandela stated the presentation was approximately an hour, although he could go through the information quickly to allow time for questions. Bea Shapiro stated the AT Committee usually had one hour to present, although she could request that the committee have two hours to present. Bob Kresmer stated that most eye care professionals would not want to attend a two-hour presentation. Bea Shapiro stated the committee could split the presentation into two parts. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the committee would be able to offer CEUs to professionals attending the presentation. Karla Rivas-Parker stated that in the past, individuals could obtain CRCs for staff, although the requests would need to be made in advance. Karla Rivas-Parker stated that she liked the information presented, although she suggested that different information be presented to ophthalmologists and the VR counselors. Bob Kresmer stated the committee was ready to request that attendees be eligible to obtain CRCs from the VRATE Board. Bea Shapiro stated she would contact Christine Tuttle and make that request. Ms. Shapiro stated the first presentation would target ophthalmologists and the second presentation would target VR counselors. Bob Kresmer inquired whether either presentation would be appropriate for the end user or a non-eye care professional. Bea Shapiro stated that individuals could attend the second presentation, which would discuss low vision and AT. Carlos Grandela stated he could offer a medical presentation and a consumer-focused presentation. Bob Kresmer suggested that some committee members participate in a workgroup to develop the VRATE presentation. Bea Shapiro, Karla Rivas-Parker, Bob Kresmer and Carlos Grandela agreed to participate on a VRATE workgroup. Sue LeHew suggested the first

presentation be focused on eye care professionals and the second presentation be focused on consumers. Bea Shapiro stated the committee had previously discussed AT training for VR counselors, and the VRATE presentation would be a great opportunity for staff to learn more about the available resources. Ms. Shapiro stated that RSA would be able to assist with offering CRCs and she would investigate offering CEUs as well.

AT Trends

This item was tabled.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Committee was scheduled for June 16, 2021. Agenda items are as follows:

- BARD Training Discussion
- VRATE Presentation Discussion
- AT Trends

Announcements

Bob Kresmer announced that the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) National Conference would be held virtually the week of July 4th and he would send out more information to the council.

Public Comment

A call to the public was made with no response's forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Bob Kresmer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Karla Rivas-Parker seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm.